



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LAPHONZA BUTLER NAMED SECOND DISTRICT HONOREE FOR 27TH ANNUAL WOMEN OF THE YEAR AWARD

Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas is pleased to announce that Laphonza Butler, president of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) United Long Term Care Workers, is the Second District recipient of the 27th Annual Women of the Year Award. Butler, will join honorees from the four other Supervisorial Districts at a luncheon hosted by the Los Angeles County Commission for Women at 11:30 a.m. Monday, March 12, at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel in downtown Los Angeles.

Butler, who is one of 25 International Vice Presidents of the SEIU, chairs the Health Care Worker Training Center, and is a nationally recognized expert on the issues of working families and the labor movement.

“Laphonza is a tenacious advocate for social and economic justice,” said Supervisor Ridley-Thomas. “Her drive and commitment have created crucial opportunities for the thousands of hard working people she represents everyday.”

Butler, whose organization represents more than 179,000 in-home caregivers and nursing home workers throughout California, has played a key role in shaping the labor movement's strategy for organizing emerging multi-national corporations such as Sodexo, Compass, and Aramark. She helped lead SEIU and Unite Here to join forces to form Service Workers United in response to the outsourcing of millions of food service jobs, organizing what essentially had been a non-union industry.

Butler is a Mississippi native and graduate of Jackson State University. Her native South is where she developed the skills that would help her excel in mentoring leaders around her and empowering the members she represents.

For the past 27 years, the commission has honored women who serve as outstanding role models for women, who have demonstrated exceptional achievements in their professions.

This year's other honorees are: Sandra Figueroa-Villa, executive director of El Centro Del Pueblo; Carolyn Rose, founder and board member of Meeting Each Need with Dignity (MEND) and Marianne Haver Hill, president and chief executive officer of MEND. Pilar Pinel, founding president of Embracing Latina Leadership Alliances; Cheri Fleming, treasurer and secretary of Soroptimist International of the Americas; Margaret Neill, athletic director of Paraclete High School, and Virginia Goss Cushman, community advocate & former educator.

"I applaud these remarkable women who are dedicated to helping others live their best life," said Supervisor Ridley-Thomas. "These phenomenal honorees are role models for girls and women throughout the County."

The Los Angeles County Commission for Women was established in 1975, to represent special interests and concerns of women of all races, ethnic and

cultural backgrounds, religious convictions, social circumstances, and sexual orientation. One of the Commission's priorities has been to recommend programs or legislation to promote and ensure equal rights and opportunities for women.

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